

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, October 17, 2003

COACHES AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE: A NEW PARTNERSHIP TO CURB YOUTH CRIME

Each day in the US, eight young people die as a result of gun violence. That's why this fall, the MPDC is teaming up with high school football and soccer coaches, principals and teachers, parents and students in a new public awareness campaign to curb gun violence involving young people. The program is called "Coaches Against Gun Violence," and it is working to prevent future tragedies like the one that changed forever the life of Edgar Lane. In 2001, Lane was a star wide receiver and defensive back on the Roosevelt Senior High School football team. Today, he is a quadriplegic—the victim of a shooting last February as he and a friend were seated in a car stopped at a red light in Northeast DC. Lane's personal testimonials helped to kick off the anti-violence program earlier this month, during halftime of the Roosevelt-Eastern SHS football game. He was joined by Assistant Chief Ron Monroe of ROC-North, Principal Leslie Philip and Coach Daryl Tilghman of Roosevelt, Ward 4 Councilmember Adrian Fenty and former NBA basketball coach Don Casey—all encouraging others to join together in a new effort stop the violence by and against young people. Similar dedications in honor of student-athletes harmed by gun violence are being held at high school football and soccer games in DC. The pilot program is organized by the DC-based Alliance for Justice. Organizers hope to expand the program this winter during basketball season.

- ① Learn more about Coaches Against Gun Violence at:
http://www.allianceforjustice.org/student/against_violence/index.html
- ① Read the *Washington Post's* coverage of the dedication ceremony at:
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A63495-2003Oct8.html>
- ① This year's national Student Pledge Against Gun Violence will take place on Thursday, October 23. Details, including a copy of the pledge, are available at:
<http://www.pledge.org>

PHOTO RADAR PROGRAM HITS NEW MILESTONE: FEWER THAN 7 PERCENT OF MOTORISTS ARE SPEEDING AGGRESSIVELY

For the first time since the program began in the summer of 2001, fewer than 7 percent of all motorists monitored by the MPDC's Photo Radar Speeding Reduction Program were found to be speeding aggressively in September. Of the nearly 888,000 vehicles monitored by photo radar last month, only 60,000 were found to be traveling at or above the threshold speed established for the program. That represents just 6.8 percent of all motorists—the lowest monthly percentage of aggressive speeders since the program began in July 2001. That month, which was an initial "warning period," close to 31 percent of all motorists were found to be speeding above the program's threshold. (The MPDC does not ticket motorists traveling only a few miles per hour above the posted speed limit, but rather has a threshold above the posted limit at which drivers are ticketed.) The percentage of aggressive speeders was 21 percent in September 2001 and 8 percent in September 2002. Average speeds of all vehicles traveling through photo radar enforcement zones are also down substantially over the past 26 months. To date, nearly 675,000 photo radar citations have been issued and more than 478,000 have been paid, resulting in \$35.7 million in fines collected. This level of consistent speed enforcement has been achieved without having to pull uniformed officers from neighborhood patrols.

- ① Read the latest photo radar results at:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speedresults_text.shtm
- ① Now in its fourth year, the MPDC's traffic safety cameras have produced a 60.5 percent reduction in red-light running violations at the 39 intersections equipped with cameras. Details at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/redlight.shtm>

KEEPING “TRICK-OR-TREATERS” SAFE THIS HALLOWEEN

The warning may sound familiar to experienced “trick-or-treaters” and their parents. But with Halloween just two weeks away, it’s still a good idea to review important safety tips for young people and families. Again this year, the MPDC encourages residents to follow some basic precautions. In selecting costumes, bright, reflective and flame-retardant materials are a must, as are comfortable, well fitting shoes. Face paints are encouraged instead of masks. Pedestrian safety is another critical concern. Trick-or-treaters are reminded to stay on the sidewalk and to cross only at the corner (not between cars). And motorists are encouraged to slow down and be on the lookout for children. In the area of general safety precautions, residents are encouraged to turn on exterior lights and clean up any debris near their property that children could trip on. And, of course, youngsters should never go into peoples’ homes, talk to or accept rides from strangers, or eat any goodies before their parents have a chance to inspect them at home. Finally, many police districts, community groups, business associations and others host Halloween parties. Parents should consider these as a safe alternative to door-to-door “trick-or-treating” for their children.

DC REGION FOCUSES ON PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Already this year, 11 pedestrians have been struck and killed in traffic crashes on DC roadways—representing more than 20 percent of this year’s fatalities. And while that percentage is actually down from a few years ago, the number of pedestrian deaths remains far too high—not only in DC, but also in surrounding jurisdictions. That’s why DC Mayor Anthony Williams, Montgomery County (MD) Executive Doug Duncan and Fairfax County (VA) Board of Supervisors President Kate Hanley joined with police and transportation officials this past week in launching a new pedestrian safety campaign. Called “PedSafe,” the campaign features print, television and outdoor advertising to educate pedestrians and motorists on safe walking and driving in the DC region. The majority of the pedestrian fatalities this year in DC appear to have resulted from pedestrian error, such as not crossing the street safely. The new campaign is designed to remind pedestrians to practice safe walking and to encourage motorists to be vigilant in looking out for pedestrians and respecting their rights.

NEWS & NOTES

Citizen Summit III. Residents are encouraged to join Mayor Williams, Chief Ramsey and other DC leaders for Citizen Summit III, on Saturday, November 1, from 8 am–4 pm at the new Washington Convention Center. Details and online registration are available at:

<http://citizensummit.dc.gov/main.shtm>

Annual Awards Ceremony. The MPDC’s fourth annual Awards Ceremony will take place on Thursday, November 6, 2003, at 7 pm, in DAR Constitution Hall. Outstanding sworn and civilian employees, along with community partners, will be recognized for their crime prevention efforts over the past year. For details, call (202) 727-3778.

Use of Force Agreement Update. The MPDC’s Civil Rights and Force Investigation Division has published its latest quarterly update on implementation of the Memorandum of Agreement with the US Justice Department on use-of-force issues. Read the complete report (in PDF) at http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/pubs/pdf/FIT_progress_1003.pdf

ABC Training for Merchants. DC’s Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration, with the assistance of the MPDC and other agencies, is offering another round of free training to merchants on how to sell and serve alcohol responsibly. Details at <http://www.mpdc.org/blue/news.asp?sid=2366>

① A comprehensive list of Halloween safety tips and resources is available at: <http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/season/halloweensafety.shtm>

① Any “stranger-danger” threats to children—on Halloween or any other time of the year—should be reported immediately to the police by calling 9-1-1. Suspicious candy or other non-emergency situations should be reported through the MPDC’s 3-1-1 non-emergency number.

① For more details on PedSafe, contact Lt. Patrick Burke, traffic safety coordinator for the MPDC (telephone: 202 727-4315). You can also e-mail Lt. Burke at pburke@mpdc.org.

DATA BOX

Homicides (as of 10/17/03)

- 2003: 196
- 2002: 197
- % Change: -0.5%

Arrests (week ending 10/11/03)

- Total: 818
- Drugs: 122
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 22
- Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 42

Firearm Recoveries (as of 10/15/03)

- Total: 1,511
- October: 66

Traffic Fatalities (as of 10/17/03)

- 2003: 54
- 2002: 44
- % Change: +22.7%

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC’s Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

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